

The  
Alcester Grammar



M.D.C.  
NOBISCUM  
CHRISTUS STATE.

School Record

April, 1943.

No. 68

December 1942

Received from Miss E. Gander

the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Pounds

two Shillings and three Pence

Record  
for A.G.S., Dec'42 - July'43

Signature V. V. Droller

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# Alcester Grammar School Record.

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No. 74

APRIL, 1943.

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EDITOR—MR. V. V. DRULLER.

COMMITTEE—

M. AUSTIN, J. PLESTERS, D. SAVAGE, M. PARKER,

D. JONES, STEWART, SHARP.

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## Notes and News.

The Spring term opened on Tuesday, January 12th, and closes on Thursday, April 8th.

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A succession of entertainments and parties marked the last week of the Autumn term. The Dramatic Society led the way by presenting its first play—in the afternoon of Friday, December 11th, to Forms Upper IVa and b and upwards; in the morning of Monday, December 14th, to Forms IIIb, Remove, ii and i, and in the afternoon to Forms Lower IVa and b, and IIIa. On Tuesday afternoon, December 15th, the French Circle had their Party. On the same afternoon Lower IVa and b had a party in the hall, and the following afternoon there was a similar party for IIIa and b. The Preparatory department also had their party on Wednesday, December 16th.

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At the closing assembly on Thursday, December 17th, hockey colours were presented to J. Blakeman, G. Spencer and Joan Horseman; while Savings Certificates in lieu of a gold medal for tennis were handed to D. Villers.

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During the Christmas holidays, the school sustained a very serious loss by the death of Dr. R. H. Spencer, on December 31st. Dr. Spencer was to a large degree instrumental in securing for Alcester the present Grammar School. He served on the governing body from the time of its formation, and was its chairman from 1918 until the time of his death. Most of us cannot remember a time when he was not in the chair on Speech Day and Sports Day, and

those functions will not seem the same without his presence. He was keenly interested in all that concerned the school, and was always ready to fight for anything which he considered would improve the children's opportunities of obtaining an up-to-date education. He will be very much missed. A party of scholars from Forms VI and Upper V attended the funeral service at Alcester Parish Church.

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The prefects this term are Stewart (head boy), Arnold, Yapp, Burns, Ore, Kirby, Sharp; D. Savage (head girl), M. Austin, B. Francis, K. Hemming, D. Villers, M. Goodall, J. Buller, J. Plesters, M. Moizer, K. Wilson, O. Davies, W. Archer, S. Careless, J. Godwin.

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The Sides captains are:—**Brownies**: Collett and B. Francis; **Jackals**: Arnold and K. Wilson; **Tomtits**: Yapp and D. Savage.

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Towards the end of last term, the Sixth and Upper Fifth had two talks, one given by Mrs. R. Charques (née Dorothy Taylor) on "Books," the other given by Mr. R. Charques on "Russia."

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Mr. Thornton is School Fuel Watcher and Miss Slote School Salvage Steward.

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On Tuesday, January 26th, junior forms heard a lecture in support of Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

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A lecture on "Canada," illustrated by lantern slides, was given to Forms Upper IV and upwards, on Friday, January 29th, by Mr. Martin.

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On February 26th, Mr. Francis, Midland Education Officer of the B.B.C., visited the school, and Forms VI and Upper V had with him a general discussion on social problems.

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A lecture on "China" was given on Monday, March 1st., to the two senior forms by Mr. B. I. Chiu.

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On Wednesday, February 10th, we received a visit from the Directors of Education of Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

For a considerable time the double-decker 'bus has proved inadequate to accommodate Studley and Redditch pupils in the afternoon. This term an extra 'bus has been put on, which travels by the lower road to Redditch.

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A new system of daily tickets for school dinners has been introduced this term, pupils purchasing tickets before entering the dining room.

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Half term was Monday, February 22nd.

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Our thanks to K. Wilson and Lewis for gifts of books to the School library.

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We hear that five members of the Sixth form propose to attend Youth conferences at Cheltenham during the holidays.

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This term we are losing four members of the staff, all of whom are taking up fresh appointments. They are Miss G. D. Mobbs, Miss M. E. Moore, Miss M. Tilley and Mrs. J. Wood. We wish them success at their new schools.

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During the absence through illness of Mrs. Glover, for the first half of the term, her work was taken by Miss Hutchinson.

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Mr. S. F. Bates, who is a captain in the R.I.A.S.C., writes quite cheerfully from Ceylon.

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The cross country races were run on Thursday, March 11th, the senior event being won by Draysey, with Gray ii a close second, and the junior event by McCarthy.

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On Friday, March 12th the upper part of the School attended a film display in the hall, following which short addresses were given by an Army and an A.T.S. officer.

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The Science Sixth have recently been described as being "quite at home in the fume cupboard." They are anxious to know if this is the alternative accommodation with which it is hoped to provide the Sixth in the near future.

**School Register.**

## VALETE.

*Collins, A. D. (VI), 1934-42.	Winwood, R. E. (Low.VB), 1938-42.
*Ore, A. G. R. (VI), 1937-42.	Fifield, G. M. (Upp.IVB), 1941-42.
*Spencer, G. R. W. (VI), 1932-42.	Lloyd, J. A. (Upp.IVB), 1937-42.
Aspinwall, G. B. (Upp.V), 1934-42	Garfield, G. O. (Low.IVA), 1941-42.
Baylis, E. (Upp.V), 1932-42.	Summers, G. G. (Low.IVB), 1941-42.
Harris, R. T. (Low.VA), 1938-42.	Jackson, G. F. (II), 1939-42.
Lambon, A. B. (Low.VA), 1940-42.	Smith, R. (II), 1941-42.

\*Prefect.

## SALVETE.

Brooks, K. E. (Rem.).	Perrins, B. T. (ii).
Fancutt, D. R. (Rem.).	Shaw, D. (Rem.).
Goalen, H. McN. (Low IVA).	Walker, J. E. (IIIB).

There have been 367 pupils in attendance this term.

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**Old Scholars' News.**

Greetings to all Old Scholars, in whatever part of the world they may be. A number have paid us short visits in the course of the term and we have been very interested to hear of their various activities. We have news of more and more of them both in the services and on war work.

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Congratulations to K. Bailey, who has been promoted to a captaincy and is now in charge of a company. Not very long ago, so we hear, he met E. Chattaway in the Middle East.

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Congratulations also to S. Styler, who is now a First Lieutenant, also in the Middle East.

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To the list of Old Scholars now serving in that theatre of war, which was given in the last magazine, should have been added the names of J. Ison and P. G. Smith.

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Congratulations also to F. Duxbury, who has now his commission and Navigator's wings, and who after instructing in Canada is now back in England.

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Recently we received a long letter from D. Gwynne-Jones, who is serving in India, and holds the rank of Lieutenant.

Also in India, and also with the rank of Lieutenant, is R. Midlane.

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Sergeant H. G. Orme (R.E.), is now in North Africa.

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G. Figures is now Sergeant in the R.A.F., in which branch of the Forces J. Hemming and E. Portman are also serving.

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F. Houghton, who is in the Signals, has visited us at school on two occasions recently.

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Another visitor to School was Betty Hawkins, who is now a member of the W.R.N.S.

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Corporal E. Blackmore (R.A.F.) is home from West Africa, where he has spent the last two years.

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Among other Old Scholars in the Forces are D. Spencer, who is in the Signals, and G. R. Wilkes who is in the Navy.

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D. Goode, we are informed, has joined the Merchant Navy.

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We were sorry to hear of H. Thomas's accident in the autumn, but we are pleased to know that his badly fractured leg is improving.

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On Monday, January 18th, Pearl Jephcott was one of the speakers in the opening discussion in the B.B.C. feature entitled "Living and Learning."

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Members of the School Scouts are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain uniforms nowadays. Mr. Walker would be very grateful to any former members of the troop, who would let him have their discarded uniform.

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P. G. Chatterley (scholar 1937-42) has passed the entrance examination to Southampton University College as a cadet for future entry into the Merchant Navy.

**Births.**

On July 24th, to Mr. and Mrs. I. B. Licence (née Margaret Lane)—a daughter.

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On August 15th, to Mr. and Mrs. W. Ring (née Marjorie Davis)—a son.

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On November 13th, to Mr. and Mrs. E. Bowen—a daughter.

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On December 19th, to Major and Mrs. K. L. Clark (née Vivien Wright)—a son.

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On December 29th, to Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Humphreys (née Anne Steele)—a son.

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On February 8th, to Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Luker—a daughter.

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On March 2nd, to Mr. and Mrs. S. Ison—a daughter.

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On March 7th, to the Rev. and Mrs. D. S. Bailey—a daughter.

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**Marriage.**

On November 13th, in London, Pilot Officer William Burton Watkins to Daisy M. Ison (scholar 1928-38).

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**Death.**

On January 27th, at Leicester, Alfred Norbert Clemson (scholar 1933-36), aged 20 years.

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**Catkins, Duty and Patriotism.**

With unfailing regularity that seasonal pain in the neck has visited me again. To be more accurate, not a pain in the neck, but a weight on my chest, stifling my spontaneity and tinging all my thoughts with a dull greyness. Yes, once more duty, with a pistol in back, sternly commands that I write an essay. Now if I were a celebrated novelist I should, I've no doubt, be only too glad of the chance to air



my views, whether they were of any value or not, but as I am not celebrated at all, much less a novelist, I visualise with misgiving the nausea that my platitudes may cause.

I gaze into the fragile depths of the catkin poised in the jar before me. What lovely things catkins are—the very symbols of carefree innocence. But I must concentrate.

Much has been said in previous magazine articles about the odds that beset a would-be contributor; how rudely one's family interrupts from time to time at inappropriate moments. Yet never I should think have so many diversions appeared as in wartime. War in itself causes a changed outlook on life. Our sense of proportion, through years of dominance so deeply rooted, must find some answer to the questionings which mind and inclinations put forward.

"Ah, there's an idea!" I think to myself, "a sonnet setting forth the wonderings of an adolescent in wartime."

The first two lines gush forth even as the waters gushed from the rock at the blow of Moses's rod. This is easy. But that word is rather too long, and has too many 's's.' "Can anyone give me a word meaning 'associations,' containing three syllables with the emphasis on the first, and ending in 'ent.'?" Mother is far too interested in "Gone With The Wind," and father, thinking I am doing a crossword, suggests that I try the next square. I am ashamed to admit that I make a somewhat caustic answer, to which father, looking very hurt, replies, "What good is it going to do you anyway?"

"Yes, what good?" I think, desperately remembering the photographs of A.G.S. sixth formers down the years—learned, but oh so sad; and a fierce yearning felt often of late seizes me again. How can we be expected to live beautifully and poisedly like Lamb, when all the world breathes Conrad?

Wherever one goes one sees superbly efficient A.T.S., immaculate W.R.N.S., or Land Girls with freedom glowing from their faces. I want to do something big, I want to do something wonderful; to make some contribution to the effort of winning the war; to help with the social re-adjustment afterwards. I want to live life, not read about it.

I stop to recover myself and reflect. And reflecting I suddenly realise that taking all these patriots individually, how few of them really have the chance to take their own line. What a small percentage ever have the satisfaction of seeing their ideas made concrete. Perhaps the greatest

heroes are those who plod along unnoticed, just one of a team ready to go forward or ready to stay put.

After all the catkin is no less beautiful because the war is on, and who knows, some war-weary father home on leave may be astonished and refreshed to find that there are still catkins and schoolgirls.

D. SAVAGE (Form VI).

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### **United Nations Day.**

The Editor, Alcester Grammar School Record,

Dear Sir,

With the conclusion of my first year of training in the R.A.F. it has struck me that I haven't once written to the old school. Thus to atone in some measure for my negligence I propose to relate a few of my experiences during the non-training hours in the service.

On United Nations Day, that being June 14th, 1942, I decided to take a stroll down the Mall, gaze with my usual fervour at the Palace and finally to relax on the soft turf of St. James' or Hyde Park. The sun added to the utter beauty of London that day. The newsreel men first attracted my attention, but when the all-knowing Londoners began to congregate around the Palace gates, then I knew that here was one airman who was getting a front seat.

By two o'clock in the afternoon the crowd was mighty indeed and I had visions of a heavy day for the First Aid people; the heat was almost unbearable by this time. As the Palace gates opened and Diplomats and Ambassadors of the Allies began to line the road in front of me, I saw the tall Fighting French figure of De Gaulle. He seemed to be in conversation with M. Maisky, an undaunted person if ever there was one. The American, Mr. John Winant, who had been taking part in the morning service at St. Martins-in-the-Field, I believe, was standing with the representative of China.

Thus was the scene arranged when King George and his Queen, Elizabeth, followed by Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose, led the way to the saluting base. The rest of the company comprised the King of Norway, Haakon, King Peter of Yugoslavia, the President of Poland, President Wladyslaw Raczkievich, Dr. Benes of Czecho-

slovakia, and Crown Prince Olaf of Norway. When Churchill took up his position below the dais, the crowd gave its usual muffled roar of, "Good old Winnie." He seemed young and his movements were sharp and clearly defined; when the sound of bands and marching feet came nearer, he thrust his hand into his pocket and with a deft movement produced a watch. His look of consternation when he saw what the actual time was seemed to say, "Hum, two minutes' late." The section of the mass in which I was firmly wedged gave a roar of approval at this typical Churchill expression; there was no doubt that Churchill was their man. I think that most of the onlookers were a trifle disappointed in that Winnie had, for this special occasion, dispensed with the cigar; who ever heard of Winston Churchill minus cigar? It almost had a sombre significance,

The "Springboks" with me "fell" for the Royal family that day. At first they were hard boiled, full of patriotism but still "hard boiled." Before the day had drawn to a close they were no longer "hard boiled," but had a full understanding of the Englishman's attitude towards the Royal family; that day seemed to weld all the fighting forces of the United Nations into one determined unit; that day, for me, held true significance and great promise.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. W. WHITEHOUSE.

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### **The Sunset.**

I stood alone upon the crest of a hill,  
And the world around me was quiet and still,  
All the little folk had gone to rest.  
For the sun was sinking in the West.

A solitary star in the sky was winking,  
As in a blaze of colour the sun was sinking.  
Tinting the sky with a glorious hue,  
With gold, pink, mauve and the palest blue.

I stood alone, beneath it all,  
And gazed with wonder at what I saw.  
Then a soft sweet song rose upon my right;  
T'was the full-throated thrush's warm "good night."

Slowly the sunset faded into azure blue.  
And the thrush's song faded and died too,  
And I stood upon the crest of that hill.  
With the world around me quiet and still.

JOYCE RICHARDSON (Lower IVB).

### **The Best Laid Schemes.**

(being an extract from my diary, showing the malignancy of fate).

#### **Thursday Evening.**

Spent in planning the week-end. Great concentration, which implies much chewing of pencil. Choke on piece of wood which I thoughtfully remove. Thought is productive of a determination to enjoy myself in a 'quiet sort of way'—which merely means no visit to the cinema and nothing worse, and is dictated by economic necessity. My eye falls upon a book—the very thing. With this and the radio shall find plenty of entertainment. With great stealth abstract a fair ration of sweets from the family's 'pool tin' and hide them with much dexterity and equal satisfaction. Can now look forward to relaxation.

#### **Friday.**

Spend strenuous day wrestling with the intricacies of English grammar. Arrive home in a state of mental exhaustion brought on by disability to distinguish between a gerund and a present participle. Look hopefully at table and receive horrid shock. No tea but instead a note, 'Back Soon'—and the fire is out.

Emerging at length with blackened face and scorched eyebrows, decide not to tempt Providence further, and leave things as they are. Procure some tea, which I eat with all speed and great economy in the use of crockery. Washing-up is not one of my joys. Mother returns and lights fire—not without comment on the lack of consideration of some people.

Peace at last. Switch on radio. A series of ominous splutters which might have been the signal for a display of energy on the part of a swing band, but weren't—and then silence. With a sigh, I bow to the inevitable and decide I may as well go to bed.

#### **Saturday.**

Awake in a mood of aggrieved pessimism, prepared for the worst, which materialises. An order to clear out the shrubbery. Rummage in tool shed to find the necessary implements. Attempt to lift a mysterious sack, and the bottom falls out. Dense clouds of a white, floury powder float round me. Hastily conceal the evidence of the crime, and emerge from shed with a pair of shears and a would-be-nonchalant air.

After an hour, an ache in my back is undeniable. The sight of a large frog sitting complacently two or three yards away decides me. I beat a precipitate retreat to the house with a great deal of mud adhering to my shoes. Attempt to get it off, and cut my finger. Spend rest of day endeavouring to compose water-tight excuses for not finishing the job.

### **Sunday.**

Settle down to enjoy the peace of a Sunday afternoon. Look round for my book—in vain. Despairing, ask my sister if she has seen it.—“Oh that! I’ve lent it to someone.” Retire disgruntled, and begin to tidy bookcase in an endeavour to assert moral superiority over those who lend out other people’s books. This takes longer than I had anticipated. Finish just in time to be asked to get tea ready. My luck is definitely out. A chance glance into my satchel reveals some homework to be done. Finish it during supper, disregarding comments on some people’s habits in reading at table.

### **Monday Morning.**

Radio mysteriously restored to working order by frenzied efforts of my father. Am just in time to be greeted by crooner’s voice: “I haven’t said thanks for my lovely week-end.” Climax!

MARY AUSTIN (Form VI).

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### **Friends.**

Through the streets of London  
An organ grinder came,  
And perched upon his shoulder,  
His monkey, who was lame.

The children crowded round them  
To see this little pet,  
They gave him nuts and money,  
The nuts he quickly ate.

In normal, peacetime, London,  
This was a common scene,  
But now in wartime London,  
These two are never seen.

But though they’ve joined the forces,  
No parting has this meant,  
The monkey is the mascot,  
Of his master’s regiment.

VALERIE SHARP (Lower IVA).

### **Wasps.**

I denounce wasps, as wilful disturbers of the peace. Wasps must have been created merely to annoy, for they seem to serve no useful purpose. One can tolerate the bad temper of bees, which make such delicious honey; but as for wasps, they take all and give nothing, except stings, which are not wanted by anyone.

It is a known fact, that picnics are a favourite hunting-ground of these experts in aerial warfare. I can scarcely remember a picnic which has not been marred by the advent of these merciless insects; from painful experience I have learned that "discretion is the better part of valour" where wasps are concerned.

Wasps usually do their marauding in bands, for if there is one wasp, there are sure to be others somewhere in the vicinity. A telegraph system must have a place in every colony of wasps, as they always manage to find their way to the nearest jam-jar straight as an arrow, and surely their noses—if they have any—are not so keen as that.

For all their faults, and they have their share, wasps are rather attractive to look at. They are certainly colourful, and their black and yellow bodies remind me of those hideous football jerseys affected by certain players. It has never occurred to you perhaps that wasps could, like human beings, have different expressions on their faces; but they have. I once killed a wasp which had quite a coy expression, quite unusual in such fearsome beasts; its vertically-set mouth had a foolish simper, even in death, and for the first time I felt sorry that I had been so blood-thirsty, and so eager to avenge my many stings.

Sorry! I said I was sorry; probably I was at that moment, but when I consider the many instances of unprovoked assault which it has been my lot to witness, not even that affected-looking lady wasp could call me to repentance. After all "revenge is a kind of wild justice" and I feel I am justified in destroying as many wasps as come within my reach. Summer, I hope, will see me once more seated in the window seat with a fly-swotter in my hand, and a look of malice in my eye.

E. M. ROSE (Upper V).

### **The Amusements of a Simple Child.**

How often one hears people express their pity for the 'only child'! True, the only child misses a great deal in the way of companionship, but he has his compensations. I have never heard of an only child being conscious of a sense of loneliness, but I suppose that is just another case of 'what you never have you never miss.' The only child has, if he is not to be bored, to spend a great part of his time with imaginary playfellows. This acts as a superb stimulant to the imagination, though whether this is a good thing or not I cannot say.

I was and am an only child. I was never particularly lonely and never at a loss for something to do. Like Alice I often used to play games with myself, though not croquet, and scold myself for cheating. I played all sorts of games. I built houses with wooden bricks, and knocked them down again; I dug deep holes in the ground in search of buried treasure; I had an ambition to cut all the lawn with a pair of very small scissors; I once tried to bath a black kitten, but a neighbour ran out and rescued him just in time. One vivid memory I have is of dolls' weddings, or more often toy animals' weddings, with bouquets of daisies and butter-muslin bridal veils, and the whole ceremony consisting only of a long procession, since at the tender age of about five I had never been to a real wedding. I also used to have wonderful adventures making long and treacherous journeys round a quite small garden. I used to pack a rucksack with biscuits and a bottle of milk, and take a long stick. This was a sort of 'Pilgrim's Progress' affair but without the same good intentions. Besides imaginary perils there was a dreadful forest of gooseberry bushes (about half a dozen of them) to be scrambled through, and a small trellis-work gate to be climbed over, providing there was no one looking out of the window to witness this forbidden act.

Later on I became interested in all sorts of 'experiments.' A dolls' tea service was never used as such, but generally as vessels for the mixing of medicines, ointments, dyes and poisons, concocted from everything from mud to the red juice from begonia petals. This sort of 'chemistry' was not too difficult, since with a little imagination any one concoction could be changed into anything else under the sun. I also became interested in zoology, although I did not know it as such then. I collected worms, frogs, snails, butterflies and beetles, and on rare occasions I slipped out

of the garden unobserved and dashed off to the nearest pond, armed with a net and a jam jar. I used to lie face downwards on the muddy bank generally in a clean frock, trying to capture tadpoles and sticklebacks. Occasionally I used to fall in the water and generally used to soak my shoes and stockings, when I used to cheerfully walk home barefooted, creep in quietly, and be remarkably unseen and unheard until I had got dry.

On rainy days when I had to play indoors there were books and chalks and a blackboard. I read many fairy stories, especially the ones with witches or wicked queens in. I had my own titles for fairy stories; for instance "Beauty and the Beast" was always to me "The beautiful young lady and the beast who was a gentleman after all." Rather rambling, but quite comprehensive, you must agree. "Cinderella" was just "Cinderella" but I always added the moral, 'beware of having large feet.' Once I came across a dictionary giving the pronunciation of more complicated words by a second simplified spelling. This fascinated me, for, queerly enough, I was always intrigued by letters, never numbers, and I began inventing alternative spellings of my own for the various longer words in my rather limited vocabulary. Two such alphabetical acrobatics were 'dek-stir-us-lee' and 'kwant-it-ee.' This spelling game kept me amused for several days. I think I would have preferred a spelling bee, but that is difficult when one is quite alone.

How little there really was to do then! It seems amazing that I could ever have looked round for new things to do: the question now is to decide which thing is to be done first. When I was so very young there was time to watch rain-drops chasing down the window pane, to gaze at the big brown cow and wonder how many more buttercups it could eat. But, in the oft-quoted words of W. H. Davies,

"A poor life this, if full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare."

I think I made use of some of that time to "stand and stare," though after a period of years I am inclined to reflect with a little cynicism and even a little remorse on all those hours trifled away. So many hours made happy by such simple amusements—the amusements of a simple child!

R. J. PLESTERS (Form VI).



### **A Race Against Time.**

One night during my stay at a quiet farm house I was awakened by the continual noise of aircraft passing overhead. I lay awake for some moments listening to the drone of their engines. My attention was then attracted by the queer noise of a single aircraft which had detached itself from the main body. As I listened I could tell that the plane was gradually losing height. I got out of bed and watched it for a moment. Not waiting for it to crash I slipped on my clothes and left the house.

While I was reaching the plane things had happened quickly; the plane had crashed and two of its occupants had escaped, but one was still trapped. On seeing this, his colleague immediately entered the burning plane, knowing that it would not be many seconds before the flames reached the petrol tank and then if they were not clear of the wreck they would both lose their lives. With this in mind he struggled quickly through the flames and falling debris. When he reached his companion, he found that he was trapped. Quickly he freed him and began to drag him back through the wreck. At last they emerged from the burning cockpit to where the other member of the crew was awaiting them. He helped both to the ground, and then the rescuer collapsed at the same time as the flame reached the petrol tank and the plane exploded. And so he had succeeded in his race against time.

The men were then taken to the farm house, where they remained until an ambulance came and took them to a nearby hospital.

SHEILA RYMELL (Upper IVa).

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### **A Pedlar Man.**

A pedlar man is a ragged man,  
Who travels about in a caravan,  
That rattles, clanks, sighs, and groans,  
When travelling over ruts and stones.

This pedlar-man with his grave blue eyes,  
Never grumbles and looks so wise.  
As he trundles along with his saucepans and kettles  
Admiring the flowers and their fragrant petals.

The pedlar-man's horse is dapple grey,  
And he always longs for his bag of hay,  
While the pedlar with his merchandise  
Is selling it at a reasonable price.

CYNTHIA WILLIAMSON (Upper IVB).

### **Goal.**

(purely imaginary).

My first hockey match will ever remain in my memory. It was not a very inspiring match; as a matter of fact we lost it, but I shall remember it because of one incident.

The opposing team's centre was a kindly chubby girl with plump legs, and she seemed very inoffensive to me—the long-suffering goaly. However, about five minutes after the commencement of play, our defence was 'left behind.' To my amazement the plump, jolly centre had turned into a speedy and efficient forward, whose one aim was to score a goal. Her wing passed the ball to her and she advanced rapidly towards me. I had an empty feeling in the pit of my stomach as I saw her plump legs advancing towards me. I wanted to laugh aloud at the defence, who were lumbering madly after their respective forwards, only my tongue had stuck to the roof of my mouth. Now the centre was only three feet away from me. I crouched and waited. Then I saw the ball rolling slowly towards me. I shut my eyes and kicked. Nothing happened—except that a small round object had rolled sedately under my foot into the net.

JOAN HORSEMAN (Lower Vb).

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### **A Weird Night.**

It was Friday night and my father had to go fire-watching. After a little rushing round, cutting supper and putting tea and sugar, he hurriedly wished us good night and departed, not exactly in the best of humours. The night was dark, cold, and also very windy; so we drew our chairs close to the fire until about nine o'clock when we retired to bed.

About half an hour afterwards, just as we were comfortable and dozing, a knock came at the door. We decided that whoever it was, his business could not be very important and we let him knock until he grew tired of it, and very relieved we were to hear the footsteps fade away down the garden path.

Snuggling down more comfortably than before, we went happily to sleep, but our repose was short-lived, for again we heard, this time, quite a banging. This was really too much, and, wishing the intruder everything that was bad, we decided to let him tire himself out. But after some time

had elapsed, and the banging still continued, mother, who was in a real rage by now, decided to tell this unwelcome visitor a piece of her mind. Putting on her dressing gown and slippers, she strode angrily to the top of the stairs, but then halted, and asked little me if I would go down with her. How I trembled! and by this time mother's bravery had died away as the banging still continued.

Taking hold of each other's hand, we eventually reached the bottom of the stairs and asked who was there; but we received no reply. The knocking seemed to recede from the door round the front of the house, and from there to the entry. With the aid of a torch, we reached the corner and peered round. Our courage came back with a rush. The knocking had been caused by a piece of trellis work, which father had hung by string in the entry, until he could finish a job round our back lawn.

Relieved and disgusted we returned to bed and slept for a few minutes (as it seemed), when again knocking, this time accompanied by whistling, awoke us. On this occasion it was father, who immediately informed us what a peaceful night he had spent. But he took that trellis upstairs into the lumber room before we served his breakfast.

We also discovered later that the first series of knockings was made by a friend of ours, who was in the habit of calling on us in the evenings.

DOROTHY JONES (Lower Va).

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### **Early in the Morning.**

As I lay in bed in the early hours of the morning, I gazed dreamily at the floor, when suddenly my attention became riveted on a big black object moving towards the bed. I lay still scarcely daring to breathe. My first idea was to get right down under the sheets, but on second thoughts I decided on another plan.

I got quietly out of bed and picked up the nearest thing handy; then I tiptoed round and brought it down heavily on that horrible black object. I shuddered as I removed the mangled remains of a spider from the sole of my slipper.

JEAN PRICE (Lower IVb).

### **On Writing a Magazine Article.**

How many of us, when we have read a magazine article, lay aside our book with a feeling of true gratitude to the author? Until I made this attempt I did not realise what writing an essay of this kind means. Now I feel that it is time someone pointed out to the readers of school magazines what we owe to those painstaking people, who faithfully and regularly produce some piece of literature.

Although the result may not always indicate it, hours of thought and worry are expended in the weeks preceding publication. The writer exhausts both himself, and all who have dealings with him, by repeatedly demanding what he can write about. Dozens—that is no exaggeration, of wild ideas enter the head, and each appears wonderful. But there is one common disadvantage; the idea may seem good, but when one begins to make notes its interest diminishes to such an extent that one despairs of success on the original subject. The most discouraging part of the business of writing is the feeling that one must be interesting. This is enough to check anyone's ambitions.

In one's very young days, writing an article for the school record was a most ridiculously important affair. The memory of my only success is still dear. I sat out in front of the class, holding a pen for the first time in my life; I was treated as someone special. It may have been because I felt important, or because I had my stockings on inside out (for luck, I believe), but the result of a morning's thought was published. It ran thus:—

"I had a balloon and I was in the garden and my cat scratched the balloon and it popped and I got such a fright that I nearly turned a somersault, and when I landed I wondered what had happened, and I asked kitty to find it and Mummy laughed till she fell too."

The magazine in which this masterpiece appeared is still a treasure. It often makes me wonder what influences the editor's choice. Does he make his selection with his tongue in his cheek? However, the productions of the juniors of ten deserve publication more than those of their elders; they rarely fail to amuse the reader.

There is little satisfaction to be gained by the author of our school magazine articles. One may rejoice in the knowledge that one has inflicted a blow on one's fellow-men, but this is a poor motive. It is hardly a great enough consideration to outweigh the discouragements.

If one was the first person to write such an article, one's task might be comparatively easy; but it is not simple to find an original subject. One strives to think of a title which is not too common, but after one or two sleepless nights, as the final date of entry draws near, one is forced to decide. One takes up one's pen and writes, giving up at least a whole evening to the effort. Eventually the task ends, and one reads the result. Was it worth it? Since the chances of its being published are probably fewer than one in ten, one is inclined to say, "No."

That would be foolish and wasteful; so one mutters, gloomily, and in somewhat unconvinced tones, "Better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all."

JEAN BULLER (Form VI).

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### **The Spitfire.**

I heard a noise up in the sky,  
I smiled and shut my book;  
A Spitfire was flying high,  
I raised my head to look.

And then I heard a throb, throb, throb;  
Six planes were in a row.  
I saw they were a "Jerry" mob,  
And flying rather low.

The Spitfire turned, and with a snort  
Dived down to the attack.  
The jerries did not wait for long,  
They turned round and raced back.

The Spitfire now was on their tail;  
One plane was going down,  
And out the pilot had to bale  
To land in my home town.

And now there were left just five Huns,  
Limping on their way;  
The Spitfire finished them with its guns—  
The end of a glorious day.

It roared and swept across the sky,  
It did the victory roll:  
And then it went off flying high,  
With six Huns to its toll.

So here's to British planes a toast,  
And may they fly for ever,  
And keep quite clear the British coast,  
In both bad and good weather.

MAIDIE BIRCH (Upper IVB).

### **The Gypsy.**

Rita is a gypsy and she is ten years old. She earns her living by dancing at the fairs. She is nut-brown and has long black hair; usually a bright red handkerchief is tied over it, and her ears are adorned by gold rings.

Every morning she rises at half-past six and runs across to the brook to fill the buckets with water. When she gets back the fire is lit, and a savoury smell issuing from the pot hung over it. She joins the circle gathering round the fire, and eats of the contents from the pot.

After her breakfast, if it is her turn, she washes the crockery and then proceeds to practise her dances, and probably watches the others practising their turns also. After which she helps her mother prepare the dinner.

In the afternoon she romps, and plays on the ground outside the caravans with the other children, and in the evening she performs on the stage in front of a small or large audience, according to the season.

At about half-past eight, in the yellow caravan with white muslin curtains, she goes to bed and sleeps soundly, for life in the open air is very tiring.

MAUREEN PALLETT (Lower IVa).

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### **Mathematics.**

Have you ever noticed the different expressions on the form's faces when the mathematics lesson comes round? Some are groaning, some think it is a joke and some look sick! Nothing ever changes it. Why? Is not mathematics an interesting subject? Are not mathematics lessons very enjoyable? Some of my form-mates disagree; they think it is a waste of time!

We wonder why our books are returned. Is our homework unsatisfactory? When the books are collected, why are some missing? Why do we cheer when the teacher forgets to give us any homework? They say a policeman's lot is not a happy one, but neither is a mathematics teacher's with all these problems!

Mathematics "sides matches" are reckoned as an entertainment. Everyone is pleased—except the three competitors! If a member of the form who is good at mathematics tries, there are cheers from the members of his house, but boos from all the rest! At the end, when the points are added up, there are more cheers—and boos!

J. PRESTIDGE (Lower IVb).

### **Our Village.**

The trouble with our village is  
There's never any time to spare.  
There isn't time to stay at home  
Or go and drop in anywhere.  
Our missus never seems to sit  
And put her feet up on a chair.  
But every night it's just the same ;  
She's rushing here or rushing there.

The trouble in our village is,  
That every night there's something on ;  
Pie Supper at the Village Hall  
To raise funds for the churchyard wall,  
Whist-drive and dance for this or that  
(They don't come home till after one.)  
We're not like other villages—  
It's every night there's something on.

Only last week we had a man  
Who'd just come back from Timbuctoo !  
He gave a lecture in the school  
And told us all the natives do.  
There's Keep-Fit Class and monthly dance,  
Gas Drill and St. John Ambulance,  
And sewing meeting and Mother's Guild,  
And debates for men in arguing skilled,  
And Women's Institute—you see  
Life's not like what it used to be.

The trouble with our village is  
—As everyone I know complains—  
The Parish Council's gone and started  
Interfering with the drains.  
We've supped our water from the well  
Since ancient times, as I've heard tell,  
And carried pails from the village pump  
And chucked our rubbish in the Dump.  
Town folk with all this modern fuss  
“ Die a lot oftener than us.”

The trouble in our village is  
There's too much traffic in the street.  
I saw three vans but yesterday—  
The Bread, the Laundry and the Meat.  
I said to Mr. Treadaway  
“ We're more like London every day.”

MARY C. PARKER, (Upper V).

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### **The Unsuccessful Schoolmaster.**

Mr. Jenks is nearing the retiring age. Looking back over his career he thinks of all the things he might have been, and wonders why he was ever a schoolmaster.

He is modest and retiring and can never bring himself to exert discipline over his pupils. He has an abhorrence of spiders, and well remembers the day Brown i dropped one into his collar and he felt more like taking sal-volatile than chastising the offender. He loves books and reading and it is painful for him to hear the classroom version of Shakespeare and the poets. He loves cleanliness and order but for years has lived amongst grubby hands and inkstained fingers. He dislikes cold winds and violent exercise but has regularly had to dance around a sticky field amongst "mud-died oafs."

Retirement will be bliss and he will occupy his lesiure time in compiling a treatise on the Babylonian cuneiform writing.

D. H. EADIE (Lower Vb).

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### **Rabbit Keeping.**

It was the end of the vegetable show. The prizes had been distributed and now the winning vegetables were being sold in aid of the local Red Cross Fund. Suddenly, much to the amusement of the crowd, a rabbit was held up. How the rabbit got there I don't know but I was suddenly filled with a desire to own it. It was eventually sold to a man at the other side of the tent.

I went home feeling quite sorrowful, for I still wanted the rabbit. Later, when my father came home, I ran out to meet him, and what was he carrying but that lovely rabbit! Joyfully I and my sister prepared the hutch.

All day our thoughts were filled with nothing but rabbits. We went to bed planning to get up at six the next morning in order that Peggotty, the rabbit, might not get hungry. Just as we were deciding how easy it would be to earn some extra pocket money by breeding rabbits, a voice came up the stairs saying, "The rabbit has got out."

We hurriedly put on our dressing gowns and shoes, and ran downstairs. I should think the rabbit got out, not to get free but just to annoy us. Among the carrots, behind the gooseberry bushes, it ran. At last we triumphantly drove it into its pen. Night after night, two dressing-gowned figures would appear chasing a rabbit who seemed to get more frisky each night.

Finally, in desperation, we sold it to a small boy for three shillings, but that sum did not pay us for the hour wasted each night.

CATHERINE FARQUHAR (Upper IVa).



### **“My Convoy.”**

Sitting alone on the river bank, waiting for my float to signal a bite, I was soon wishing for something more exciting to happen. Suddenly a convoy hove in sight, consisting of mother Moorhen as escort, her young brood, the merchant ships.

Then there was a ripple on the water from the opposite bank, a periscope coming straight for the convoy. Now for a battle. “Plop.” I had found a small stone and threw it at the enemy, a rat, which turned and swam away.

My convoy had got through.

R. E. EVANS (IIIb).

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### **National Savings.**

Savings! Yes! Just peep into Form II Room, on Wednesdays, between 1 and 1.45 p.m.

A cheerful, eager, business-like stream of savers passes along, buying stamps, blue, red and bright green and certificates too—so that money may be lent to the Government and saved for the future. These savers are doing their bit and they do it cheerfully and understandingly. They are the back-bone of the School Group. Savings are sometimes swelled by Christmas, birthday and other gifts, not to be realised till after the war. Such savings are proudly and willingly lent.

As the combined A.G.S. Group (boys and girls) has got going, it is gratifying to note that the stream of savers has swelled. This term Savings have not so far, fallen below £50 weekly, the actual average being £58 5s. 6d. This would be further increased if all members got the Wednesday habit. It is a good habit; so join in, members! Come along, immediately after dinner, and for those who go home—on return to afternoon school. Large sums of money may be handed to Miss Weatherup, in Form II, after morning assembly.

A small but keen little company may be seen in Form II on Mondays, at break. They are members from Forms I and II. They are probably the most regular savers of all.

### **The Dramatic Society.**

President: Mr. Caton.

Treasurer: F. Harrison.

Committee:

Mr. Druller, Miss Mobbs, K. Wilson, E. Rose, Price, N. Buller, Clark.

At the end of the Autumn term "Yuletide Revels in Merrie England" was produced by members of the Dramatic Society. The scene was set in a country manor house in the fourteenth century, and the revels were a mixture of pagan superstition and Christian ceremonial. The cast was a large one, there being, apart from the family, numerous retainers, parties of carol singers and a group of mummers. Costumes were varied and colourful and added to the Christmas air that pervaded the play. That the costumes could be supplied almost entirely from the Society's own properties was a surprise for many members, and the excellent stock should be a valuable help in future productions. The members of the Society are grateful to Miss Mobbs for coaching the players, and also to Miss Tilley, Miss Secker and Mrs. Glover for their assistance. The back-stage team worked most efficiently. Rehearsals and performances were greatly enjoyed both by those on the stage and by those behind the scenes, for the production had its humorous side, and some of the properties were sources of amusement—not least the bottomless tankards. The chief importance of the play however was that members actually used the stage and gained some small experiences of acting together.

Since practice in acting is particularly needed, the Society this term has divided into acting groups, led by Miss Mobbs, Miss Cookson and Miss Secker.

K.M.W.

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### **Debating Society.**

President: Miss Evans.

Secretary: Stewart.

Committee:

K. Wilson, N. Nash, Sharp, Eadie, Budden.

A debate took place on December 16th, the motion being that "This house is convinced that convention is the enemy of progress," proposed by Collins and J. Plesters, and opposed by M. Austin and J. Buller. Although many good arguments were put forward by both sides, the issues

became slightly confused. Many good speeches were delivered, especially by the younger members. In the end youth proved willing to discard convention for progress and final victory went to the proposition by a large majority. It is hoped that another debate may be held at the end of this term.

J.M.S.

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### **Cadet Corps.**

There have been a few changes in the Corps this term. Sergeant Collins has left and taken up a preparation course at Edinburgh University for the R.N.V.R. He gave very useful service, and helped to maintain a high standard of discipline in the unit; we wish him success. Sergeant Stewart is now in charge of the N.C.O.'s of the unit, and there have been other promising promotions. The unit is now at full strength, and the newcomers are quickly finding their feet.

A visit from Major Morell, M.C., proved very interesting, a lecture on the "Royal Warwickshire Regiment" providing the cadets with some illuminating history of the regiment to which we are affiliated.

The training of the Cadets goes on steadily, and it is hoped that a few of the seniors will enter for the first part of the War Certificate "A" in the near future.

C/LIEUT. HADWEN.

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### **Scouts.**

Activities have proceeded on usual lines. The fine weather this term has enabled us to have more outdoor work, and observation exercises and message carrying have as a result yielded good experience. Keeness in tests has been maintained and many of the younger Scouts are well on the way to completing their second class. The collection of horse chestnuts last term yielded 5 cwts. 20 lbs., for which the funds have benefited by £1 18s. 10d. A further donation of 25s. from old scouts has been added to the B.P. Memorial Fund.

E. S. WALKER, S.M.

## Football.

Captain: Hillman.

At the end of last term the school suffered further loss, by losing its captain and one other member. In the first match, against Redditch, it was found that there had been great improvement among the younger members. Their experience from the defeats of last term proved valuable and gained the very satisfactory result of a draw. This improvement was shown throughout the team, and a victory over the A.T.C. was very encouraging. The defence has played steadily all through the term and there are signs of more combination among the forwards.

RESULTS : A.G.S. v. Redditch (home) draw 2—2.  
v. A.T.C. (home) won 2—0.  
v. Evesham (home) lost 2—4.  
v. Evesham (away) lost 1—5.

SIDES MATCH : Jackals 8 v. Tomtits 1.

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## Hockey.

Captain: J. Blakeman.

On account of the condition of the field there was not much hockey played until late in the term, and the matches against Bromsgrove and Evesham had to be cancelled.

At the end of last term hockey colours were awarded to G. Spencer, J. Horseman and J. Blakeman.

The enthusiasm in the lower forms of the school has led to the foundation of a Second XI.

The results of last term's sides matches were:—Brownies v. Jackals, 2—0; Brownies v. Tomtits, 7—0; Jackals v. Tomtits, 5—0.

The School has been represented this season in the First XI by J. Allen, J. Wright, G. Spencer, A. Lambon, G. Beachus, D. Villers, S. Careless, N. Nash, B. Adams, J. Buller, M. Hoperoft, J. Horseman, B. Baylis, I. Irving, J. Lloyd, J. Blakeman; and in the Second XI by J. Hill, J. Prosser, J. Faulkner, J. Horseman, A. Villers, M. Moizer, S. Summerhill, J. Higgs, M. Irving, D. Bridgman, M. Slaughtier.

J.F.B.

### **The Snowdrop.**

When I walked in the garden  
On the first day of Spring,  
The ground was hard and frosty,  
While the birds had ceased to sing.

But in a sheltered corner  
There was a speck of white ;  
A pretty little snowdrop.  
Had grown there in the night.

The world seemed full of joy again  
And the birds began to sing,  
For the sun shone on my snowdrop,  
The first sign of Spring.

WENDY HOWES, (Upper IVB).

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### **For the Juniors.**

#### **My Pony.**

My pony is named Topper ; he is a light fawn and is thirteen hands high. He is used to hunting and was out only a week ago, as I have only had him six days. He is used to jumping hedges, ditches and stiles and all things like that.

He has not got a pony trap, but daddy is going to buy one if he can get one. He is ten years old, and he has not tried to kick while I have been grooming him or any other time. I groom him for twenty minutes each day. He has a nice quick trot and not a slow one.

BRENDA THOMPSON (Remove).

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#### **THE GHOST.**

I made up this poem,  
I did it last night.  
I had quite a scare  
In the middle of the night.

It was so eerie,  
I shivered with fright.  
I thought it was coming,  
I yelled for a light.

It was so little,  
It walked about,  
It was so thin,  
I gave such a shout.

A. HADWEN, (Remove).

### **My Calf.**

At home I have a little calf whose name is Robert; his colour is brown and white. He is in a pen in the wood shed and lies on wheat straw. We feed him on calf gruel, which we give to him out of a bucket. We have to put our fingers into his mouth to make him drink, but we have to be careful he does not bite us, because he has got teeth. He tickles our fingers with his tongue, because it is so rough.

E. T. VALE (Remove).

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### **The Cat and the Mouse.**

Once there was a cat and a mouse. They lived in a little house together. And one day the cat found that the mouse had made a hole in the floor. When the cat found that he had done it, he did not like it. So he ran after him but he could not catch him. But he did in the end.

MICHAEL CATON (Form II).

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### **THE LITTLE FIR TREE.**

In the middle of a wood  
A little fir tree stood.  
It was very short and green,  
And very very lean.  
One day it began to snow,  
Then the fir bent very low.

PETER BURDEN, (Form II).

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### **The Robin and the Tit.**

One snowy morning when I looked out of my bedroom window I saw a little robin and a tit were having a fight. Then the tit got up and flew away. The robin flew after him and sat in the tree and spoke to the tit.

ANNE WEAVER (Form II).

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### **The Wrens.**

Last week mummy was looking out of the window; she saw two little wrens in a tree. One was investigating one of our nest boxes, and the other was hopping in the tree. They later built their nest.

BARBARA DRULLER (Form II).

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**ALCESTER :**  
**THE CHRONICLE OFFICE.**  
**HIGH STREET.**

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